



State of Louisiana
Office of the Governor
GOVERNOR BOBBY JINDAL

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 4, 2011
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Governor Jindal Sends Letter to Dept. of Defense Requesting National Guard

BATON ROUGE – Today, Governor Jindal sent the following letter to Department of Defense requesting that the National Guard be utilized – under Federal Title 32 status – to respond to record water levels in Louisiana.

May 4, 2011

Honorable Robert M. Gates
Secretary of Defense
Pentagon
Washington, DC 20310

Dear Secretary Gates:

I ask that you approve funding for a period of up to 45 days of military duty in Title 32 USC 502(f) status beginning May 4, 2011 for 1,500 Soldiers and Airmen of the National Guard serving on active duty in support of our response to record water levels in the Mississippi and Atchafalaya rivers within the State of Louisiana. As you know, our state is still recovering from the economic and environmental disaster caused by the Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

The latest river forecasts from the lower Mississippi River Forecast Center includes 2 days of heavy rainfall upstream which will result in significant and record setting rises on the Mississippi and Atchafalaya rivers. All points along the Mississippi River are currently forecast to reach or exceed flood stage by mid-May. There is a significant probability that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will open the Morganza Spillway for the first time since 1973. This will flood the Atchafalaya Basin, necessitating a significant evacuation operation. Flooding from the Atchafalaya and Mississippi rivers will threaten lives and cause catastrophic damage to personal property, and businesses as well as state and federal infrastructure located within the projected flood zone.

The National Guard will provide support to include but not limited to search and rescue, medical, engineering, communication and security of federal and state facilities. Because of limited engineering and aviation resources in the Louisiana National Guard, I anticipate this to be a multi-state response for the National Guard. Therefore, I anticipate requesting National Guard forces from other states in the region as needed to augment our capabilities. Using the National Guard for these operations is necessary and appropriate to protect this region of our nation and critical federal infrastructure from this significant national event with potential catastrophic consequences.

Thank you for consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Bobby Jindal

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